Ohio | Department of Education

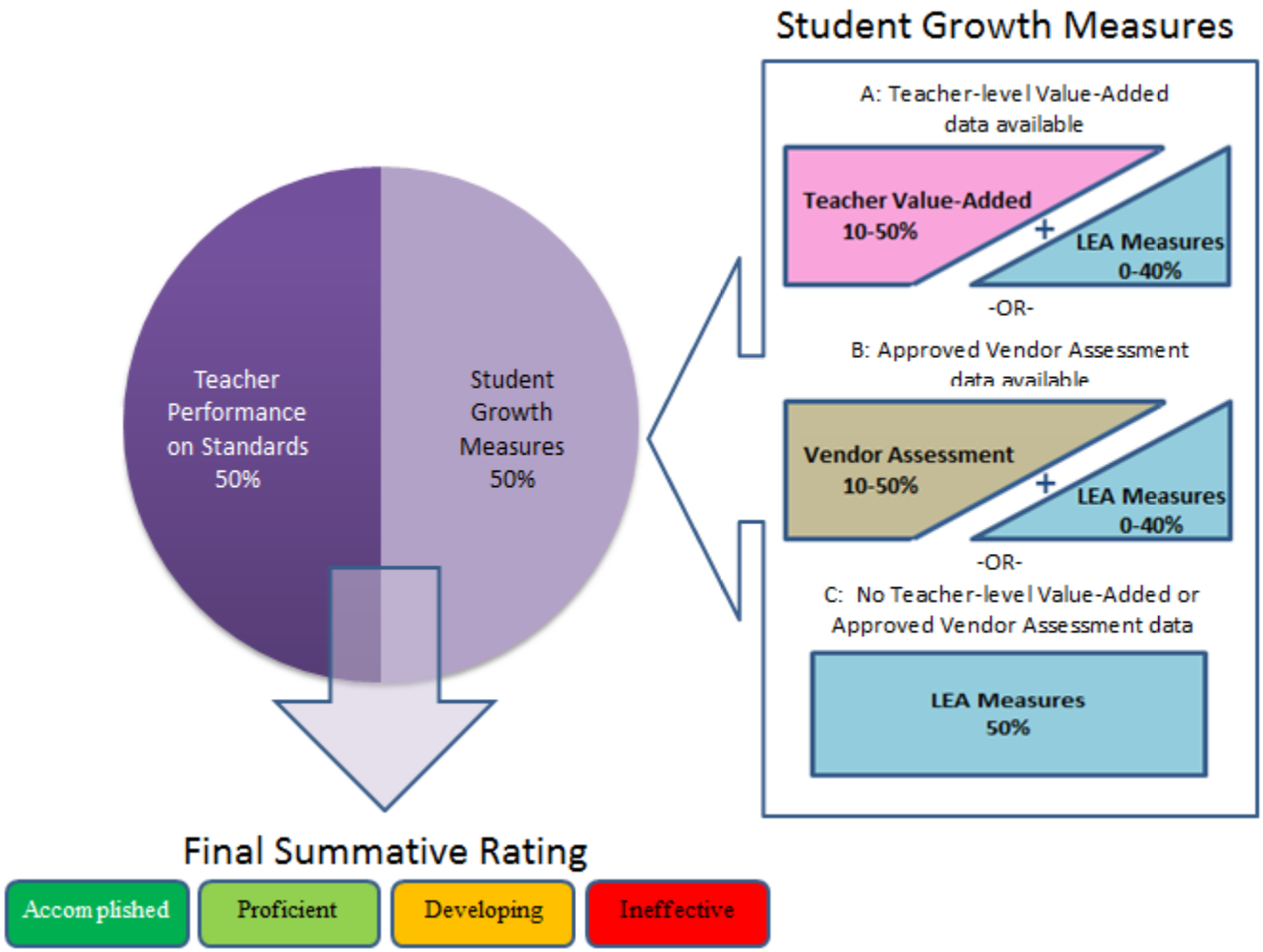
Student Growth Measures Frequently Asked Questions

In accordance with Ohio Revised Code and State Board of Education Framework

Student Growth Measures Overview

Ohio's new system for evaluating teachers will provide educators with a richer and more detailed view of their performance, with a focus on specific strengths and opportunities for improvement. The new system relies on two key evaluation components, each weighted at 50 percent: a rating of teacher performance (based on classroom observations and other factors), and a rating of student academic growth.

The challenge for measuring student growth is that there is not a single student assessment that can be used for all teachers. Local education agencies (LEAs) must use data from the state Ohio Achievement Assessment and Ohio Graduation Test when available. If those are not applicable for a given subject or grade, LEAs can choose to use other assessments provided by national testing vendors and approved for use in Ohio. For subjects in which traditional assessments are not an option – such as art or music – LEAs should establish a process to create student learning objectives (SLOs) to measure student progress in those courses.



Implementation

Q: Does the Ohio Department of Education (ODE) support the use of value added data as the entire 50% growth measures?

A: The Ohio Department of Education does not recommend that value added be the only measure included in the student growth measures. However, by definition of value added measures, there are multiple measures included in the value added score. It is a local district decision if only value added data is used in the student growth measures part of the teacher and principal evaluation systems.

Q: Where does the system begin in year 1 of implementation? If I look at the graphic it appears with value added data from the previous year but very few teachers in our LEA have that data.

A: In year one of implementation every teacher and principal will start on a professional development plan (unless the district had already placed that teacher or principal on an improvement plan). Starting with the professional development plan allows for comparability within buildings, districts and the entire state.

It is expected that after the first year of implementation in 2013-2014, teachers and principals will be placed on professional growth plans or improvement plans depending on their student growth measures.

Q: Can Student Growth Measures be more than 50% of the teacher or principal evaluation?

A: No. The law (Ohio Revised Code) is very clear that the student growth measures must be used for 50% of the evaluation. This applies to all traditional public schools, and community schools in Race to the Top grant.

Q: I am a teacher who has value-added data. My value-added data is from the year before. My district has determined that I can use local measures, too. Are the local measures from the current year or are the local measures from the same year as the value added data?

A: If a teacher has value added data available, then the value added data must be used. It is a local district decision if local student growth measures are used. In this case, the district has decided to use local measures in addition to the value added student growth measures.

There is no way within the current state assessment system to change testing dates and value added reporting dates to happen within the same school year. As we move into using rolling averages of value added data it may take into account data from the past two or even three years, which provides the most reliable value added score. To get a complete picture of the teacher's student growth data, a district might determine (as in this case) that the student growth measures will be from value added data (which would only be available from the previous year) and then using the local measures from the current year.

In this case, there will need to be a calculation to add these two types of student growth measures together. The district will have to determine the percentage of each type to be used and then calculate the measure. The electronic evaluation system will be available in September 2012 to assist in this calculation.

Q: How will teacher's student growth measures be determined if the teacher is responsible for multiple subjects?

A: Teachers with multiple subjects that have value added data will be issued reports for a composite of reading and math. For other assessments (approved vendor and local measures), the assessment data measures should be representative of the teacher's schedule.

Q: In the adopted State Board of Education framework on the ODE website, it says that teachers with above expected levels of student growth may choose their credentialed evaluator…what does this mean?

A: The State Board of Education framework was adopted in November 2011. The law requires that schools align with the framework. The framework is specific in that teachers who make above expected growth with students may choose their credentialed evaluator the following year. This means that the district will have to determine a pool of acceptable evaluators from which the teacher with above expected growth can choose.

Q: What plans does the state have for helping districts and teachers understand how student growth measures are used in evaluation?

A: These decisions are made at a district level, with input from teachers. ODE will be offering technical assistance sessions during the 2012-2013 and the 2013-2014 school year to assist schools in making decisions as they implement student growth measures of teacher and principal evaluations. The training and technical assistance sessions will be offered regionally and may also include web-based modules.

Q: How will student growth measures be used for intervention specialists?

A: For intervention specialists, the student growth measures will depend on the availability of data. Depending on the grade and subject, they *may* receive a Value-Report report. If they teach in a grade and subject that does not receive Value-Added reports, but the LEA utilizes an assessment on the Approved Vendor list, then they should use data from those assessments. If neither are available, they will utilize an Student Learning Objective process with measures specific to their instructional setting.

In co-teaching situations, it will be very important the linkage of student to the teacher is accurate. For value-added reports, this linkage will determine the student growth report information for the teachers. A similar district developed process will be necessary to determine the student growth measures data in situations that use approved vendor assessments or local assessments.

For more information on the linkage process, please contact

Phone: 1.866.543.7555
Email: support@battelleforkids.org

Q: How can I demonstrate growth for my gifted students - they are already on top?

A: Student Growth Measures takes into account where a student started the school year academically and how much that student grows during the year. Using a gifted student's passing level on a state test likely shows little about a gifted student's growth in a given year. Many gifted students enter school near, at, or above that passing level. For these reasons, student growth measures make more sense to objectively look at gains by gifted students. High achievement scores do not necessarily indicate progress, but gains do. It is important that the assessment/ test being used and the growth calculation has what is called "stretch" . A test has enough stretch when there are enough difficult questions to discriminate achievement between the high performing students.

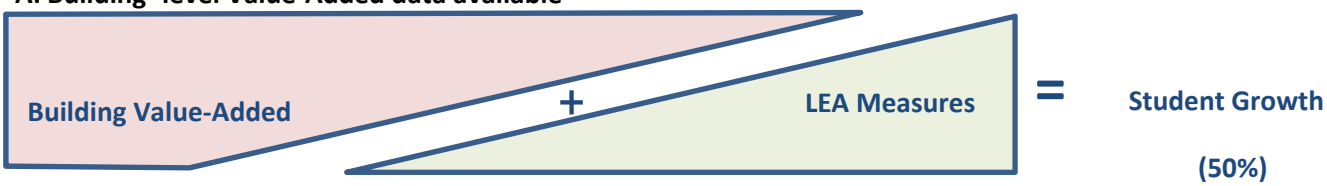
Student Growth Measures for Principals

Q: What are the student growth measures for principals?

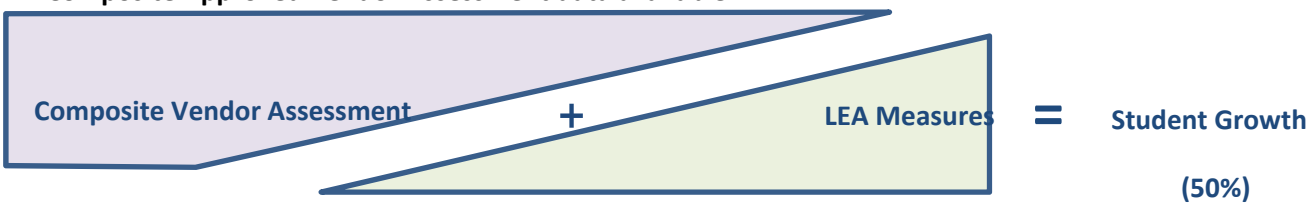
A: Student growth measures for principals have not been established at this time, but will be completed by fall, 2012. Specific information will be forthcoming. However, the principal student growth measures will need to be comparable with the teacher student growth measures.

Therefore, ODE recommends that LEAs consider a combination of measures from the following categories:

A: Building -level Value-Added data available



B: Composite Approved Vendor Assessment data available



C: No Building-level Value-Added or Approved Vendor Assessment data available

Vendor Assessments and Data

Q: It is my understanding if a teacher has Value Added data available, it must be used. However, what if this same teacher has a vendor assessment at his/her grade level? Does the vendor assessment count, too? For example, grade 4 will have value added data. We also give the Terra Nova to all grade 4 students. So, do we count both?

A: The Vendor Assignment requirement is for when Value-Added *is not available*. So for example, if you have a 5th grade math teacher with a value-added report AND Terra Nova data; that teacher would only be required to use the Value-Added. However, any of the teachers in that district who do not receive a Value-Added report would need to use the Terra Nova. It is district decision if the Terra Nova data would be treated as a local measure.

Q: The RFP submitted for Terra Nova that is posted on the ODE website states that their student growth can be visible if the test is used in consecutive years, (i.e. Terra Nova reading test %ile in grade 3 compared to Reading test %ile in grade 4). We give the Terra Nova to all students for gifted identification purposes and only test every other year. If this is the case, can this test be used for growth?

A: The vendor data would only be a required component if "available", which means the LEA meets the vendor's requirements. In the situation above it does not sound like that they would have the data available.

Q: Do we have to purchase vendor assessments?

A: Districts are not required to purchase vendor assessments. If a teacher has vendor assessment data, then that data will need to be used in the student growth measures calculation. If a teacher has value- added data, then the value-added data must be used in the student growth measures calculation. For teachers without value-added or vendor assessment data, local student growth measures will be used.

Local (LEA) Student Growth Measures

Q: **What are SLOs?**

A: The **Student Learning Objectives (SLOs)** process is for using measures that are specific to relevant subject matter. Measures for SLOs must be district-approved and may include:

- District-approved, locally developed assessments
- Pre/Post assessments
- Interim assessments
- Performance-based assessments
- Portfolios

SLOs demonstrate a teacher's impact on student learning within a given interval of instruction, and as a secondary outcome, SLOs contribute to distinguishing between effective and ineffective teaching. Ohio will offer clear guidance and rubrics to LEAs this summer and fall on how to develop, approve, and score SLOs. Look for more information on this topic on the Ohio Department of Education (ODE) evaluation website.

Q: Do all teachers in the same department or grade level in a district have to use the same SLOs/ growth measures? Do the Student Growth Measures (SGMs) have to apply to all students in a grade level or subject area, or can a specific group of students have different growth measures?

A: The district should develop an overall plan (with input from teachers) for using student growth measures for evaluation. From that overall plan, there would be a determination at the district level if certain grade levels and/ or subjects would have different percentages from that overall plan. Then, there might be specific classrooms that have different percentages of student growth measures (for example, because of a new teacher).

Student Growth Measures- General Information

Q: I need more information on student growth measures. Where do I find that information?

A: There is a link on the ODE website that includes an overview of student growth measures, the ODE approved list of assessments, student learning objectives information and tools, and steps for designing local student growth plans for evaluation. Additional information is added to this part of our website regularly.
http://education.ohio.gov/GD/Templates/Pages/ODE/ODEDedicatedPage.aspx?page=970